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10 September 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Information Services Staff

FROM:

[REDACTED]
Chief, Classification Review Division

SUBJECT: Protecting CIA Equities in 1945-49 State Records
Accessioned to NARS

1. CRD has completed its survey of the Department of State's Central Foreign Policy Files for the years 1945-49 which were accessioned to NARS in December 1970. In the survey over three million unclassified index cards and other related classified documents were checked to identify which categories contained information compromising to CIA. The risk factor in each category was estimated and a determination made as to the type of action required to protect CIA information from unauthorized disclosure. The results of this survey and the proposed solutions are contained in a 4 September 1979 "Memorandum for the Record" which is Attachment A. Mr. Edwin A. Thompson, Director, Declassification Division, NARS, orally agreed to the solutions and CRD will prepare a formal memorandum of record.

2. Basically, the problem centers on State and Foreign Service Post indices which contain extracts or summaries of classified documents; however, these indices were never classified because they were used in a controlled and classified area and considered classified. However they were unmarked when accessioned to NARS and are treated by NARS as unclassified. Some of the index cards presumably have been made available to members of the public in the past. A team of CRD officers surveyed nineteen indices at NARS and identified about 4,725 cards as of CIA interest. In some cases sensitive cards must be screened and removed from the file leaving the remainder in place; in others the amount of sensitive information is so great that the entire index or series must be restricted. Each of these indices or series is identified in Attachment A along with the action required to protect CIA equities.

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3. The classified documents from which the unclassified indices were made contain more complete information and represent a potential threat even though NARS personnel are supposed to screen the documents before they are shown to a member of the public. NARS personnel use guidelines received from State or instructions contained in the accessioning agreement. Although NARS normally requests other agencies to review documents of interest to them, NARS personnel do not always recognize those of CIA interest. In order to ensure that CIA equities are properly protected, we plan to review three files from the 1945-49 period which NARS has not screened to date because they are "full of Agency material." The proposed special review team will also check generally on NARS' screening of 97 other files which contain extensive CIA information. This work will require at least a two-man team working about 4 weeks at NARS.

4. The State records of the 1945-49 period are unique in that this period includes the records of CIA and three of its predecessor organizations -- the OSS, SSU and the CIG. These records are difficult to review because different levels of sensitivity are involved, ranging from the least sensitive OSS to the most sensitive CIA. For this reason an OSS reviewer will be assigned to work with a CRD reviewer on records originated in the 1945-46 period.

5. The next block of the State Department's Central Foreign Policy Files ready for accessioning to NARS covers the period 1950-54. State recently offered this group of files to NARS but the latter would not accept it because the accompanying State declassification guidelines were considered too general to be useful. NARS is now waiting for State to provide more specific declassification guidelines. One difference in the 1950-54 State records, according to NARS personnel, is that in 1951 State started using a reduced-in-size photocopy of the first page of the document as the file "card." In this event and if classification markings are visible in the photocopies, these index "cards" are properly classified and the indices will have to be handled accordingly. Thus the job of protecting CIA equities should be easier for this group of records. CRD plans to contact Mr. Clayton E. McManaway, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Classification and Declassification, regarding the 1950-54 Central Foreign Policy Files to determine any problems and propose solutions if necessary.



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Attachment: A

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4 September 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

FROM :
Operations Branch, Classification Review Division

SUBJECT: A Description of State Department's Central Foreign Policy
Files for 1945-49 Accessioned to NARS; Problems for CIA and
Their Solutions

1. The Central Foreign Policy Files of the Department of State for the period 1945-49 were accessioned to NARS in December 1970 to become part of Record Group No. 59 and are held in the Diplomatic Records Branch (NNFD - NN for National Archives, F for Civil Archives Division, and D for Diplomatic Branch). Attachment A is a copy of the Appraisal Report on Transfer Offer for these records dated 22 December 1970. The following paragraphs describe how these records are handled at NARS, which portions contain information relating to CIA and its predecessor organizations, what portions of those records require continued protection, and the procedures necessary to provide an acceptable level of protection for CIA equities.

2. The Central Foreign Policy Files, 1945-49, may be divided into two categories: 1) indices of 3x5 cards and 2) the documents from which the indices were created. There are three basic indices: 1) Name Cards - alphabetically by name of person or organization; 2) Source Cards - alphabetically by Foreign Service Post or other source (source being the originator of the document); and 3) Subject Cards - numerically by subject classification number, i.e., file number. The documents are filed according to a decimal system of subject classifications, i.e., a decimal system of file numbers. For example, the 103.918 series is for OSS general matters; 103.91802 is for OSS personnel matters; and further breakdowns are possible. State used extensive cross-referencing in this system so there are many more index cards than documents; also many documents are missing for reasons unknown to NNFD personnel. We have concentrated on identifying those portions of the indices and documents which contain information of a sensitive nature relating to CIA and its predecessor organizations. On a general note it should be kept in mind that the documents are screened by NARS personnel to identify those which require continued protection but the indices remain unclassified just as received from State and are not screened by NARS personnel although they do at times contain compromising information.

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3. The document screening occurs in two ways which overlap. NNFD personnel screen boxes of documents on an opportunity basis and personnel of the Declassification Branch of NARS perform a complete systematic review. When a request for a document is made and the document is in a box which has not yet been officially screened, in addition to reviewing the requested document the NNFD staff tries to screen all the documents in the box. In this preliminary screening documents requiring continued classification protection or protection under the Privacy Act are replaced with a Withdrawal Notice and placed in a manila envelope in the rear of the same box. When the Declassification Branch conducts its systematic review all the documents which require continued classification (except those requiring protection solely under the Privacy Act) are replaced by a Withdrawal Notice and removed entirely from the box and stored in a special classified project in a vault on a different floor of the NARS building. Material which is restricted solely under the Privacy Act is not removed from the box but is kept in a manila envelope in the rear of the box. All classification screening is conducted using guidelines provided in the agreement accessioning the records to NARS and using such guidelines as provided by State to NARS over the years. When the personnel of the Declassification Branch are unable to decide on the classification of a document, they refer it to the agency or agencies concerned for a determination. Such referral is done only at the time the document is requested by a customer. Once the official screening of the box is completed by the Declassification Branch, that fact is indicated by a large white tab affixed to the outside of the box making it very obvious which boxes have been and which have not been screened. All the Central Foreign Policy Files for 1945-49 have been screened except for the following six files which are of interest to us:

- The 101.5 and 101.502 files (2 boxes) (SSU and CIG Material)
- The 101.61 and 101.6102 files (7 boxes) (CIG and CIA Material)
- The 103.918 and 103.91802 files (7 boxes) (OSS Material)

4. When a request for a document is received, a member of the NNFD staff will locate the box in which the document is filed. If the box of documents has been screened as indicated by the tab on the box, the employee will remove the manila envelope containing any Privacy Act material; the rest of the material will be left in the box and given to the requestor. If the NNFD employee questions whether the document should be released (particularly in boxes screened only by the Declassification Branch) or they find a Withdrawal Notice in place of the document, they will tell the requestor that the document is classified and must be requested under FOIA. If the requestor initiates an FOIA request, the NNFD personnel will refer the document to the responsible agency or agencies for a determination whether or not it can be released. With this system, the public or customer access to classified documents is controlled by a member of the NNFD staff; however, in the process they are given access to an entire box of screened documents.

5. The indices pose a different problem for us because they are not marked classified, are not screened and they are made available to certain members of the public. (In preparing the 3x5 cards, State employees failed to note on the card the classification level of the document being indexed since the cards were used by State in a classified area only. Unfortunately, in NARS possession the cards are considered unclassified!) Bona fide researchers and persons considered to have legitimate interests in these documents are allowed into the NNFD area to review documents and, in varying ways, to search the indices. In the case of the Name Card Index, and only in this case, the individual is permitted to go into the stack area and search that index. In the case of all the other indices, the individual explains his desires and file cards by the batch or handful are brought to him by NNFD personnel to be searched by the requestor in the area set aside for use by researchers. As noted above, the file cards have not been screened and they are not screened before they are given to the requestor. At our request, NARS has put a restriction on certain index series which will not be given to researchers until we have decided whether or not they should be restricted permanently because of the information they contain.

6. The period 1945-49 covers the last year of the OSS, the total existence of the SSU and CIG, and the first years of the CIA. Generally, we are less strict with OSS and SSU material than we are with CIG and CIA material (See Attachment B - CRP 79-008/OSS - for declassification guidelines covering the period 1945-47). This means the application of somewhat different declassification standards to different portions of the records of this period. It also means that some OSS and SSU information may require continued protection because it ties directly into the

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7. Information compromising to CIA and its predecessor organizations is contained throughout one of the basic indices and in certain series within the other two basic indices. There follows a description of the areas of interest to CIA in the indices and document files. This includes the number of cards involved in each index, the dates covered in the index, the substance of the content as reflected in the cards, and the procedures required to protect CIA equities in both the indices and the documents on file:

A. Name Card Index - an alphabetical listing by name of person or organization. This index contains approximately 620,000 cards. To lessen the task of screening this index and yet keep the result within acceptable limits of risk, we first obtained a printout of

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Action required: Check the document referred to on the card. If the document has been replaced with a Withdrawal Notice, send the card to the special project to be fastened to the document. A sterile card referring to the special project will be substituted in the index replacing the dummy card (NOTE: These sterile index cards will be prepared by NARS personnel.) If the document, in our judgment, requires protection, ask NARS to withdraw it and handle as any other such classified document. If the referenced document does not require continued classification, leave it as filed and return the index card to the card file unless it contains compromising information (Special Index No., etc.); in such a case the index card will be placed in the special project and replaced in the index by a sterile card. Public access to these restricted documents and withdrawn index cards will be possible only through FOIA, Privacy Act or Mandatory Review requests and in these cases the document and card must be reviewed or referred to CIA where necessary. (NOTE: NARS has agreed to and is currently handling records for the 1940-44 period in this way and Mr. Alan Thompson, Chief of the Declassification Branch, has confirmed that they will handle the 1945-49 records in the same manner.)

B. Source Cards - alphabetically
other source, i.e., "TO" and "FROM" correspondence between the State Department and its Posts or other government agencies (not people or sources as used in the intelligence vernacular).

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1) From OSS to State - About 50 cards dated from 1 January 1945 to 31 January 1946. This is a general file with material relating to a variety of subjects. These cards were reviewed and found to contain nothing sensitive.

Action required: Release.

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2) From State to OSS - Twenty-one cards dated from 1 to 29 January 1945. This is a general file relating to a variety of subjects. These cards were reviewed and they contained nothing sensitive.

Action required: Release.

3) From the JCS to State and from State to the JCS - About 600 cards dated from 1 January 1945 to 15 February 1946. This is a general file relating to a variety of subjects including references to the SSU. The chance that this index would contain information still sensitive to the Agency is considered small.

Action required: Since there are only 600 cards, review and withdraw any sensitive cards. Replace sensitive cards with sterile cards and handle the withdrawn index cards the same as those withdrawn from the Central Name Index, to include checking and withholding the referenced document if necessary (see para 7A above).

4) From CIG to State - About 300 cards dated from 15 February 1946 to 1 September 1947. This is a general file with material relating to a variety of subjects.

Action required: Review and withdraw sensitive cards; handle the withdrawn cards and referenced documents as noted above.

5) From State to CIG - About 50 cards dated from 9 July 1946 to 1 September 1947. This is a general file with material relating to a variety of subjects.

Action required: Review and withdraw sensitive cards; handle the withdrawn cards and referenced documents as noted above.

6) From CIA to State - About 150 cards dated from 17 September 1947 to 31 December 1949. This is a general file with material relating to a variety of subjects.

Action required: Review and withdraw sensitive cards; handle the withdrawn cards and referenced documents as noted above.

7) From State to CIA - About 100 cards dated from 22 September 1947 to 12 December 1949. This is a general file with material relating to a variety of subjects.

Action required: Review and withdraw sensitive cards, handle the withdrawn cards and referenced documents as noted above.

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C. Subject Cards - filed numerically by subject classification number.

1) Index 103.918 - About 800 cards dated from 1 January 1945 to 31 December 1945 plus 15 cards dated after 1 January 1946. This index refers to general matters of the OSS primarily but some references are made to the SSU. This file was used exclusively for OSS and SSU correspondence which means that this file number effectively indicates an OSS or SSU connection.

Action required: Review and withdraw sensitive cards; screen the documents in this file to ensure all our intelligence equities are protected. These files have not been screened by NARS personnel. Any documents to be withheld will be kept in the special project with the index card affixed if applicable as detailed above.

2) Index 103.91802 - About 450 cards dated from 1 January 1945 to 31 December 1945 plus 12 cards dated after 1 January 1946. This file deals with OSS and SSU personnel matters.

Action required: Review and withdraw any sensitive cards; screen the documents and handle as 7C1 above.

3) Index 101.5 - About 175 cards dated from 15 December 1945 to 9 February 1949. The contents refer to SSU and CIG general matters but include six cards dated after September 1947 and therefore refer to CIA.

Action required: Review and withdraw sensitive cards; screen the documents and handle as in 7C1 above.

4) Index 101.502 - About 400 cards dated from 2 January 1947 to 23 October 1948. The contents refer to CIG and CIA personnel matters primarily covering overseas assignments. This index relates exclusively to intelligence matters and often specifically to SSU, CIG and CIA.

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Action required: The proportion of these cards which spell out the CIG or CIA connection is so high that the entire index should be removed and restricted. NARS previously agreed to remove some indices from the 1940-44 period and they have encountered no problems from taking that action. Also, screen the documents and handle as in 7C1 above.

5) Indices 101.6 and 101.61 - About 1000 cards dated from 5 February 1947 to 23 December 1949 referring to intelligence policy matters and to implementing and coordinating intelligence

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activities abroad much of it dealing with CIG and CIA. As examples, it includes a basic instruction on the status of CIG; a breakdown of the 1948 CIG budget; coordination of intelligence collection activities; coordination and utilization by CIA of facilities abroad; policy for the recruitment of personnel for staff intelligence and investigative positions overseas; and transmission of CIA Situation Reports.

Action required: Screen the index, and if the number of cards requiring protection is sufficiently large, consider asking NARS to restrict the entire index; otherwise, screen out those cards requiring protection. It is also recommended that we screen the six boxes of documents relating to this file to ensure that all documents requiring protection have been withdrawn (these are archives boxes).

6) Index 101.6102 - About 800 cards dated from 7 January 1947 to 31 December 1949. This index refers to CIG and CIA personnel matters and to some general administrative correspondence. This file number refers exclusively to CIG or CIA matters.

Action required: Restrict the entire index and screen the documents held in the files to ensure all CIA equities are protected.

7) Index 811.20200 - About 400 cards dated from 17 January 1945 to 13 December 1949. This appears to be a general U.S. intelligence activity file but contains correspondence relating to assignment of SSU personnel; publications procurement; disposal of government property; coordination of certain intelligence activities; financial accountings; forwarding OSS reports [redacted] and forwarding a TASS report on the reorganization of the U.S. intelligence services, among others.

Action required: Screen the index and remove any sensitive cards. Screen the documents in the file to the extent indicated as necessary by the extent of compromising information found or indicated in the cards.

8) Indices 811.20200 A and 811.20200 B - A total of 25 cards dated from 15 January 1949 to 28 November 1949. Relates to general U.S. intelligence community matters. The cards have been screened and nothing sensitive was found.


Action required: Release.

9) Index 811.20200 D - About 11,400 cards dated from 1 January 1945 to 31 December 1949. The material contained in this file appears to be the same in nature as that contained in 811.20200 listed above. Attachment C provides a random sampling of the cards in this index.

Action required: The 28-card sample contains only one reference to the SSU; otherwise the cards are innocuous. Therefore, it is suggested that we release the card index (11,400 cards) but screen the 81 boxes of documents relating to this index. This material has already been screened and much of the material withdrawn so the job will not be too demanding.

10) Index 811.20200 E - About 200 cards dated from 8 September 1947 to 31 December 1949. All the material appears to deal with finance and accounting matters concerning CIG and CIA personnel.

Action required: Restrict the entire index. Screen the documents to ensure that those still sensitive have been removed.

11) Index 811.20200 FAMILY - About 700 cards dated from 2 January 1945 to 22 July 1949. 

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Action required: Screen the index and based on the extent of compromising information found or indicated take the necessary action with the documents in the files relating to this index.

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9. There are 16mm microfilm copies of the three basic indices which also must be considered. The only existing 16mm copy of the Name Card Index was retained by State and will not be transferred to NARS "until the frequency of name checks decreases to a level acceptable to the custodial divisions." According to NNFD personnel, that index has not yet been transferred to NARS. The copies of the other two indices, the Source Cards and Subject Cards, were transferred to NARS and are stored

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at NNFD, but according to NNFD personnel, are never used. In this benign situation no action at this time is warranted. In our correspondence to NARS concerning this group of records we will mention the existence of these microfilm record copies and alert NARS that they must be screened and purged of sensitive material before being placed in the public domain.

10. Summary of Actions Required: The actions required to protect CIA equities as stated above are the same as we used to protect sensitive information concerning the OSS which appeared in the Central Foreign Policy Files for the period 1940-44. We have discussed with Mr. Alan Thompson, Chief of the Declassification Branch at NARS, our desire to use the same procedures with the 1945-1949 records and have received his oral concurrence to do so. NARS personnel will make up the approximately 500 substitute file cards which we will file. We will also review approximately 4,725 file cards to screen out those containing sensitive information and which will have to be replaced by substitute cards as above. In addition we will screen the documents referred to in paragraph 3 (16 boxes) and paragraph 7C(9) (81 boxes) as well as those documents requiring individual screening as indicated from review of the various indices cited in paragraph 7. We will ask NARS to restrict in their entirety three index series totaling about 1,400 cards: Index 101.502 of about 400 cards; Index 101.6102 of about 800 cards; and Index 811.20200 E of about 200 cards. Finally, we will alert NARS to the potential problem with the 16mm microfilm copy of the indices.

11. State Department's Central Foreign Policy Files for the Period 1950-54: This block of State records is now ready for accessioning to NARS. State has offered this block of records to NARS already but NARS refused to accept them until State furnishes more detailed declassification guidelines. State is currently wrestling with this problem and has not re-submitted its offer as of this writing. In the Fall of 1977 CRD personnel met with State Department officials concerning the 1950-54 records and specifically discussed the indices for those records. State assured us that the indices would be screened and compromising information removed. More recently, on 26 June 1979, Mr. Frank M. Machak of State in a telecon with Chief of the Operations Branch in CRD hedged on this point indicating that only some offensive index cards may have been removed and that we might want to review the 1950-54 block of records and also read the special guidelines State had prepared covering them. This apparently refers to the guidelines rejected by NARS as too general in nature. One major difference in the 1950-54 block of records is that, according to NARS personnel, in 1951 State began using a reduced-in-size photocopy of a document (or initial page of the document) as the index card. If this proves to be the case and the classification of the documents is picked up on the photocopy, the index cards will be classified and NARS will have to handle them accordingly. In any case, we should survey the 1950-54 records at the earliest possible date to ensure that our established procedures to protect CIA equities can be applied as in the past or whether some adjustments will be required.



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